

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1 - 29 (cancelled).

1           30. (new) An absorbent sanitary article for  
2 absorbing body fluids which comprises a matrix  
3 containing metallic silver and a fiber having an outer  
4 surface, characterized in that the silver is chemically  
5 or physically attached exclusively to the surface and  
6 cannot be flushed away from the fiber in use of the  
7 sanitary article.

1           31. (new) An absorbent sanitary article according  
2 to claim 30, characterized in that the surface includes  
3 depressions and the metallic silver is attached in the  
4 depressions in the surface.

1           32. (new) An absorbent sanitary article according  
2 to claim 30, characterized in that the fiber is a  
3 synthetic fiber.

1           33. (new) An absorbent sanitary article according  
2 to claim 32, characterized in that said synthetic fiber

3 is formed of a polymer selected from the group  
4 consisting of polyamides, polyesters, polyacrylics,  
5 elastanes and polychlorides.

6 34. (new) An absorbent sanitary article according  
7 to claim 33, characterized in that the synthetic fiber  
8 is present in the form of a discrete fiber, a woven, a  
9 non-woven or a thread, and said silver is present in  
10 the form of bound particles from 1 to 30 nm in diameter  
11 and in an amount equal to about 3% of the fiber weight.

1 35. (new) An absorbent sanitary article according  
2 to claim 30, characterized in that the fiber has a  
3 silver content of not more than 3%.

1 36. (new) An absorbent sanitary article according  
2 to claim 30, characterized in that the silver content  
3 of the fiber is just high enough to ensure that an  
4 antimicrobial effect is detectable for not more than 24  
5 hours on a first article surface of the sanitary  
6 article intended for body contact.

1 37. (new) An absorbent sanitary article according  
2 to claim 30, characterized in that the metallic silver

3 is present in the form of bound particles from 1 to 30  
4 nm in diameter.

1 38. (new) An absorbent sanitary article according  
2 to claim 37, characterized in that the metallic silver  
3 is present in the form of bound particles from 1 to 10  
4 nm in diameter.

1 39. (new) An absorbent sanitary article according  
2 to claim 38, characterized in that the metallic silver  
3 is present in the form of bound particles from 1 to 6  
4 nm in diameter.

5 40. (new) An absorbent sanitary article according  
6 to claim 30, characterized in that the metallic silver  
7 fully surrounds the outer surface of the fiber.

1 41. (new) An absorbent sanitary article according  
2 to claim 30, characterized in that the sanitary article  
3 contains at least one of a pulp and a superabsorbent.

1 42. (new) An absorbent sanitary article according  
2 to claim 30, characterized in that the sanitary article  
3 is constructed as a disposable article.

1           43. (new) An absorbent article according to claim  
2   30, characterized in that the sanitary article is  
3   constructed as a diaper, a pants-type diaper, a  
4   training pant, an incontinence pad, a feminine hygiene  
5   article, a sanitary napkin, a panty liner or a tampon.

1           44. (new) An absorbent sanitary article according  
2   to claim 30, characterized in that the fiber is in the  
3   form of discrete fibers, woven fibers, non-woven fibers  
4   or threads in dispersed piecewise in the matrix.

1           45. (new) An absorbent sanitary article according  
2   to claim 30, characterized in that the fiber is in the  
3   form of discrete fibers, woven fibers, non-woven fibers  
4   or threads disposed within a layer of the sanitary  
5   article.

1           46. (new) An absorbent sanitary article according  
2   to claim 45, characterized in that said sanitary  
3   article includes a first article surface intended for  
4   body contact and a second article surface not intended  
5   for body contact, and the layer is disposed closer to  
6   the first article surface.

1           47. (new) An absorbent sanitary article according  
2 to claim 46, characterized in that the layer is closer  
3 to the first article surface than to the mid-point  
4 between the first article surface and the second  
5 article surface.

1           48. (new) An absorbent sanitary article  
2 according to claim 30, wherein the fiber is present in  
3 the form of a discrete fiber, a woven, a non-woven or a  
4 thread, and said silver is present in the form of bound  
5 particles from 1 to 30 nm in diameter and in an amount  
6 sufficient to ensure an antimicrobial effect detectable  
7 for not more than 24 hours at a first body contact  
8 surface of the sanitary article.

1           49. (new) A process for producing an absorbent  
2 sanitary article for absorbing body fluids which  
3 comprises a matrix containing metallic silver,  
4 comprising the steps of disposing a fiber having an  
5 outer surface in said matrix and binding said metallic  
6 silver exclusively to said fiber surface.

1           50. (new) A process according to claim 49, wherein  
2 the binding step includes applying silver to the fiber

3 surface by electro, chemical or electrochemical  
4 deposition or by vapor deposition.

1 51. (new) A process according to claim 49 wherein  
2 the silver is bound to the fiber by means of a chemical  
3 or physical bond.

1 52. (new) A process according to claim 49, wherein  
2 the fiber surface includes depressions and the metallic  
3 silver is attached in the depressions in the surface.

1 53. (new) A process according claim 49, wherein  
2 the surface of the fiber is mordanted prior to the  
3 binding of the silver.

1 54. (new) A process according to claim 49, wherein  
2 the fiber is a synthetic fiber.

1 55. (new) A process according to claim 49, wherein  
2 the silver is applied at a weight of up to a 3% based  
3 on the weight of the fiber.

1 56. (new) A process according to claim 49, wherein  
2 the silver is only applied at a weight just high enough  
3 to ensure that an antimicrobial effect is detectable

4 for not more than 24 hours on a first body contact  
5 surface of the sanitary article.

1 57. (new) A process according to claim 49, wherein  
2 the metallic silver is bound in the form of particles  
3 from 1 to 30 nm in diameter.

1 58. (new) A process according to claim 49, wherein  
2 the metallic silver is applied such that the outer  
3 surface of the fiber is fully surrounded by silver.

1 59. (new) A process according to claim 49, wherein  
2 at least one of a pulp and a superabsorbent is  
3 incorporated in the sanitary article.

1 60. (new) A process according to claim 49,  
2 characterized in that the fiber is in the form of  
3 discrete fibers, woven fibers, non-woven fibers or  
4 threads dispersed piecewise.

1 61. (new) A process according to claim 49,  
2 characterized in that the fiber is in the form of  
3 discrete fibers, woven fibers, non-woven fibers or  
4 threads is disposed within a layer of the sanitary  
5 article.

1           62. (new) A process according to claim 61,  
2     characterized in that said sanitary article includes a  
3     first article surface intended for body contact and a  
4     second article surface not intended for body contact,  
5     and the layer is disposed closer to the first surface.

1           63. (new) A process according to claim 62,  
2     characterized in that the layer is closer to the first  
3     article surface than to the mid-point between the first  
4     article surface and the second article surface.